

**§ 153A-302. Definition of service districts.**

(a) Standards. – In determining whether to establish a proposed service district, the board of commissioners shall consider all of the following:

- (1) The resident or seasonal population and population density of the proposed district.
- (2) The appraised value of property subject to taxation in the proposed district.
- (3) The present tax rates of the county and any cities or special districts in which the district or any portion thereof is located.
- (4) The ability of the proposed district to sustain the additional taxes necessary to provide the services planned for the district.
- (5) If it is proposed to furnish water, sewer, or solid waste collection services in the district, the probable net revenues of the projects to be financed and the extent to which the services will be self-supporting.
- (6) Any other matters that the commissioners believe to have a bearing on whether the district should be established.

(a1) Findings. – The board of commissioners may establish a service district if, upon the information and evidence it receives, the board finds that all of the following apply:

- (1) There is a demonstrable need for providing in the district one or more of the services listed in G.S. 153A-301.
- (2) It is impossible or impracticable to provide those services on a countywide basis.
- (3) It is economically feasible to provide the proposed services in the district without unreasonable or burdensome annual tax levies.
- (4) There is a demonstrable demand for the proposed services by persons residing in the district.

Territory lying within the corporate limits of a city or sanitary district may not be included unless the governing body of the city or sanitary district agrees by resolution to such inclusion.

(b) Report. – Before the public hearing required by subsection (c), the board of commissioners shall cause to be prepared a report containing:

- (1) A map of the proposed district, showing its proposed boundaries;
- (2) A statement showing that the proposed district meets the standards set out in subsection (a); and
- (3) A plan for providing one or more of the services listed in G.S. 153A-301 to the district.

The report shall be available for public inspection in the office of the clerk to the board for at least four weeks before the date of the public hearing.

(c) Hearing and Notice. – The board of commissioners shall hold a public hearing before adopting any resolution defining a new service district under this section. Notice of the hearing shall state the date, hour, and place of the hearing and its subject, and shall include a map of the proposed district and a statement that the report required by subsection (b) is available for public inspection in the office of the clerk to the board. The notice shall be published at least once not less than one week before the date of the hearing. In addition, it shall be mailed at least four weeks before the date of the hearing by any class of U.S. mail which is fully prepaid to the owners as shown by the county tax records as of the preceding January 1 (and at the address shown thereon) of all property located within the proposed district. The person designated by the board to mail the notice shall certify to the board that the mailing has been completed and his certificate is conclusive in the absence of fraud.

(d) Effective Date. – The resolution defining a service district shall take effect at the beginning of a fiscal year commencing after its passage, as determined by the board of commissioners.

(e) Exceptions For Countywide District. – The following requirements do not apply to a board of commissioners that proposes to create a law enforcement service district pursuant to G.S. 153A-301(a)(10) that covers the entire unincorporated area of the county:

- (1) The requirement that the district cannot be created unless the board makes the finding in subdivision (a1)(2) of this section.
- (2) The requirement in subsection (c) of this section to notify each property owner by mail, if the board publishes a notice of its proposal to establish the district, once a week for four successive weeks before the date of the hearing required by that subsection.

(f) Exceptions for Article 24 District. – The following requirements do not apply to a board of commissioners that proposes to create a service district pursuant to G.S. 153A-301(a)(11) that covers the entire unincorporated area of the county:

- (1) The requirement that the district cannot be created unless the board makes the finding in subdivision (a1)(2) of this section.
- (2) The requirement in subsection (c) of this section to notify each property owner by mail, if the board publishes a notice of its proposal to establish the district, once a week for two successive weeks before the date of the hearing required by that subsection. (1973, c. 489, s. 1; c. 822, s. 2; 1981, c. 53, s. 1; 1995, c. 354, s. 2; 2005-433, s. 10(c).)